

# AN INCREDIBLE JOURNEY

The Underground Railroad Bicycle Route features some of the American heartland's most beautiful countryside. Highlights include national recreation areas, beautiful river valleys rich with wildlife and scenery, historic sites, Niagara Falls, Lake Erie, civil rights museums, the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, and much more.



The route will run from Mobile, Alabama, to Lake Huron in Ontario, Canada. Following lightly traveled back roads, and bicycling paths, riders can pedal all 2,000 miles or enjoy a day trip using maps created by Adventure Cycling Association.

The Underground Railroad Bicycle Route will become a reality because of a unique collaboration between outdoor recreation and the public health community. With the help of business and civic supporters, we are creating one of the finest cycling and historic expeditions in the nation.

## LEAD PARTNERS



### Adventure Cycling Association

Adventure Cycling Association, America's largest non-profit bicycling organization, works to inspire people of all ages to travel by bicycle in order to explore the landscapes and history of America for fitness, fun and self discovery.

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Phone: (800) 755-2453

Fax: (406) 721-8754

[www.adventurecycling.org](http://www.adventurecycling.org)

## CMH | CENTER FOR MINORITY HEALTH

The Center for Minority Health in the Graduate School of Public Health at the University of Pittsburgh leads the nation in creating community based interventions designed to eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities by the year 2010. Our aim is to prevent risk factors for chronic diseases like diabetes, hypertension and obesity by engaging African American, Latino and other minority populations in cycling as part of a healthy lifestyle.

Graduate School of Public Health

127 Parran Hall, 130 DeSoto Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15261

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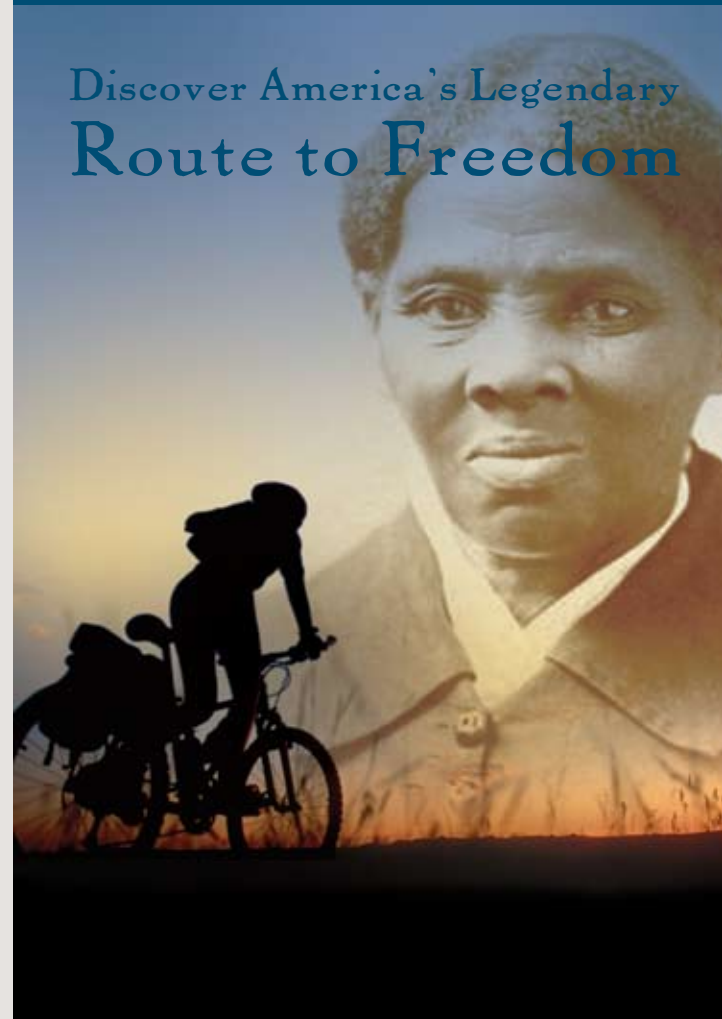
[www.cmh.pitt.edu](http://www.cmh.pitt.edu)

## SUPPORTERS



# THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD BICYCLE ROUTE

## Discover America's Legendary Route to Freedom



COVER PHOTOS BY DENNIS COELLO; HARRIETT TUBMAN PHOTO COURTESY OF OHIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY



## BUILDING A NEW ROUTE TO FREEDOM

The Underground Railroad is one of the most fabled paths to freedom in the world. With the help of countless people, thousands of African Americans escaped from slavery by following various paths, many heading north. Now we have the opportunity to celebrate and explore these passages in a unique and liberating way – on a bicycle!

Adventure Cycling Association and the University of Pittsburgh's Center for Minority Health have worked with historians and other experts to chart a singular route. The historic "Drinking Gourd" spiritual that directed freedom-seekers along Southern waterways toward the North Star served as our initial guide for the route corridor.

Together, we have developed a course from Mobile, Alabama, to Owen Sound, Canada. We are creating maps to steer cyclists, whether long-distance adventurers or day trippers, along the route. We are also working with tourism bureaus, historic societies, civil rights organizations, health agencies and Chambers of Commerce to create a fantastic travel experience.



LEIGH McDONALD

The route maps will be published by Spring 2007. Adventure Cycling Association, one of the most experienced bike travel operators in America, will conduct the first organized tour along the length of the Underground Railroad Bicycle Route.

## REAPING THE BENEFITS

The Underground Railroad Bicycle Route offers a wide range of benefits for people and communities.

- **A beautiful bike ride.** Exploring history and landscape, the route is a perfect combination for the mind and body. Take a day trip or go the distance, all 2,000 miles!
- **A celebration of heritage.** Travelers will bear witness to the uncommon bravery of those who traveled and those who offered shelter on the route to freedom.
- **A healthy alternative.** This route will encourage more people to get moving and adopt healthy lifestyles, especially as obesity levels increase across the United States.
- **An economic opportunity.** Bicycle travel has been an economic boon to hundreds of local communities and media coverage of the route can bring positive exposure to Southern and Midwestern byways.
- **An affordable, family oriented activity.** The gentle terrain and low traffic volumes along the route make possible a journey for all generations.



- **A gateway to diversity.** Through day trips, bike clubs and activities, the route opens the way for people to come together, across the color line, as one nation to enjoy the benefits of bicycling and the values of freedom for all people.

## GETTING INVOLVED

The fight over slavery divided America as never before. However, the Underground Railroad, by bringing together people of all races, ages, and backgrounds demonstrated that the power of unity and hope can bloom even in the midst of division and despair.

With the Underground Railroad Bicycle Route, we hope to emulate the teamwork that resulted in freedom for thousands of people. For the route to be a real success – for bicycling, health and history – we need your help. Here is how you can contribute to this ambitious project:

**Advocacy** – Lend us your voice, knowledge and time to help build this project's ultimate potential.

**Outreach** – The route should be enjoyed by everyone. Help us reach the people in your community.

**Financial Support** – Help us finance activities and maps that make the route accessible to everyone.

Share your ideas on the Underground Railroad Bicycle Route:

[www.adventurecycling.org/forums/](http://www.adventurecycling.org/forums/)

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